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(Security Classification)

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM

American Embassy Bonn

1241

DESP. NO.

TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

REF

Tripartite Berlin Contingency Planning paper of April 4, 1959.

SUBJECT:

Berlin Contingency Planning - Air access: Paragraph 12b, Tasks 2 & 6

In considering Tasks 2 & 6 of the April 4 Berlin Contingency Planning Paper, a basic disagreement developed between US and UK/French position on response of Allied military pilots to Soviet/GDR intercept actions within the corridors. The original agreed draft of the three Air Forces contained only section (e) of paragraph B3. Subsequently, the USA, Germany, recommended the following addition: "However, if pilot of unarmed transport aircraft ignores intercept signal and intercepting aircraft opens fire at or near him, pilot would have discretion to obey signal."

After tripartite Embassy discussions based upon USAFE's rejection of this position, the British Embassy recommended the additional wording now set forth in paragraph 12b of the enclosed Tasks 2 & 6 Paper. The British rationale appears to be based on the consideration that the British intend to employ militarized charter aircraft and militarily inexperienced civil pilots hastily called up for various airlift operations. The USA feels these pilots cannot be expected to respond properly to or report accurately on intercept action. The French stated that since they expect to be using Air France aircraft and crews flying under government decree, they feel same considerations apply.

On the other hand, USAFE points out that acquiescence to intercept signals, even after being fired on, constitutes an admission that Berlin air access depends on Soviet/GDR approval. The Embassy agrees that Soviet intentions could not be determined with finality if they are able to interrupt air access by harassment without actually shooting an aircraft down. This question could not be resolved at the Embassy level in Bonn.

The enclosed Papers are submitted to the Department for transmittal to the Tripartite Working Group in Washington for further action, and are being forwarded separately to LIVE OAK for General Norstad's comments.

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Authority NWD 901046
by HR-M MSG, 5/30/59David K. E. Bruce
Ambassador

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From AmEmbassy BONN

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Enclosures:

1. Task 7 Paper
2. Task 2 and 6 Paper

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Enclosure 1

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June 30, 1959

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BERLIN CONTINGENCY PLANNING - AIR ACCESS

Ref: Tripartite Paper dated April 4, para 12 (b) 7

Paper Agreed by the Three Embassies, Bonn

The Task

Task 7 is defined in the tripartite paper of April 4 as follows:

"12(b) The three Embassies at Bonn, in consultation with the tripartite staff in Paris or with other military headquarters as appropriate, should review or complete contingency planning to deal with the following aspects of the Berlin air access question:-

(7) Flights in the Berlin corridors above 10,000 feet".

The paper further notes that this issue might be resolved by a simple tripartite agreement to fly at an altitude appropriate to efficient operations of individual aircraft.

2. The origin of this problem is the refusal of the Russian controller in the BASC in past years to grant a so-called "guarantee of flight safety" for flights of Allied aircraft (and by the aircraft of the Polish LOT) above 10,000 feet or below 2,500 feet.

3. The three Embassies asked the three Allied Air Forces in Germany for an appreciation of the technical factors involved in flights at these altitudes. The three Air Forces have concluded that flights above 10,000 feet or below 2,500 feet, in accordance with the various Allied air contingency plans which have now been prepared, would present no significant communications or air traffic control difficulties.

4. The three Embassies have examined the quadripartite documents relating to traffic in the air corridors and conclude that the limits of 10,000 and 2,500 feet do not derive from these documents but are a unilateral claim by the Russians. The quadripartite documents provide for certain limitations on low flying (e.g. 1,000 feet or 500 feet in the corridors, depending on conditions, and 2,560 feet in the Berlin control zone in the vicinity of airfields,) but these are not transgressed by present Allied air contingency plans.

Conclusion

The three Embassies conclude that if Allied air contingency plans are put into effect the appropriate Allied air commanders should have discretion to order flights above 10,000 feet or below 2,500 feet in the Berlin corridors and control zone, whenever they consider it necessary to the success of an Allied operation that they should do so.

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Enclosure 2

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June 30, 1959

BERLIN CONTINGENCY PLANNING - AIR ACCESS

Ref: Tripartite Paper dated April 4, para 12 (b) 2 and 6

Paper Agreed by the Three Embassies, Bonn

The Task

Tasks 2 and 6 are defined in the tripartite paper of April 4 as follows:

"12(b) The three Embassies at Bonn, in consultation with the tripartite staff in Paris or with other military headquarters as appropriate, should review or complete contingency planning to deal with the following aspects of the Berlin air access question:

- (2) Possible Soviet or East German threats against the safety of flight in the Berlin corridors and control zones and,
- (6) Possible direct interference by the Soviets or East Germans with flights in the Berlin corridors or control zone."

Scope of the Study

The effect of threats on normal civil scheduled services is dealt with in part in the Task 3 Paper. It is assumed that serious threats to the safety of flight will probably result in the cessation ~~or~~ of normal civil service. The remainder of this paper is therefore concerned with action to be taken by aircraft flying under military control.

Evaluation of Possible Hazards

The three Air Forces in Germany have evaluated possible Soviet/GDR threats and direct interference as follows:

(A) Threats Against Safety of Flight

(1) The question whether flights in the corridors should be continued in the presence of a clear threat to shoot down Allied aircraft would have to be the subject of a governmental decision.

(2) The Soviets/GDR could give warning of their intention to establish either temporary or permanent restricted areas within the corridors or Berlin Control Zone. These would be quite illegal and unless the Soviets took positive action to make the restrictions effective, they would be ignored.

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(B) Direct Interference with Flights

(1) Electronic Jamming of Communications and Navigation Aids

(Including the Operation of Deceptive Radio Beacons);
Although the Soviets/GDR might attempt to jam communications
(air/ground, ground/air and ground/ground), and radio and radar
aids to navigation, it is assumed that the effective and
simultaneous jamming of all equipment throughout the corridors
and the Control Zone is beyond their present capability.
Soviet/GDR electronic countermeasures can be neutralized to
some extent by one or a combination of the following:

- (a) Technical measures that have been or are being taken:

(1) Increase ground radio transmitting power and
install high-gain directional and omni-directional
antennas.

(2) Increase power and install an ECCM (electronic
counter - counter-measure) in the Berlin Air Traffic
Control radar and improve the GCA facilities at
Tegel and Tempelhof Airfields.

(b) Effecting a procedure for frequency changes, within
framework of available frequencies, to offset the
effects of spot-jamming.

(c) Instituting additional noise modulated channels for
passing important message traffic to Berlin.

(d) Employing an air navigation system and/or ground
navigational aids less susceptible to jamming.
Although suitable equipment exists, the time factor
may prevent their installation.

(e) Flying only in VMC and VMC marginal conditions, in
which event the problems arising from the need to
increase sortie rates must be accepted.

(2) Restricted Areas: The effect of a threat to institute
restricted areas in the corridors or control zone has been
discussed in paragraph (A) 2. The Soviets can take positive
action to make restrictions effective by:

(a) Holding live firing exercises. Aircraft would take
evasive action as necessary to clear the area, but
must remain within the corridor. Subsequent flights
through the area would depend on a governmental
decision.

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- (b) Instituting air activity of sufficient intensity to hazard safety of flight. Aircraft would continue to fly as required and the increased risk of collision would have to be accepted.
- (c) Physical Interference (e.g. Balloons). Obstructions could be removed by either air action or by convert? measures, both courses of action requiring governmental decision.

(3) Ordering Aircraft to Land:

- JCS prefers* →
- (a) Military aircraft would ignore intercept signals if the pilot is satisfied he is within the corridors, but obey if over the Soviet Zone and outside the corridors.
 - (b) The British and French Air Forces consider that should the fighters open fire after an order to land has been ignored, the Captain of a transport aircraft should then have discretion to comply; the pilot of a probe flight would not, of course, be given this discretion.
 - (c) The US Air Force considers such compliance inconsistent with the April 4 Paper and considers that acquiescence to intercept signals, even after being fired upon, would constitute admission that Allied air access to Berlin depends solely upon Soviet/GDR approval. The US Embassy concurs in the US Air Force position as stated in (3)(a) only.
 - (d) A Governmental decision is required on the response of Allied military aircraft to Soviet/GDR intercept signals if fired upon.

(4) Attacks on Aircraft: In the event of the Soviets/GDR taking direct military action resulting in the loss of an Allied aircraft, three courses of action are open:

- (a) Continue air transport operations, accepting the risks of subsequent attacks.
- (b) Suspend operations temporarily, pending such diplomatic action as may be taken.
- JCS prefers* → (c) Use tripartite tactical aircraft to maintain air access.

Selection of one of these courses would require Governmental decision.

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Conclusion

The three Embassies agree that the paper should be referred to governments to take note of the courses of action proposed by the three Allied Air Forces and of the points on which Governmental decision will be required.

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